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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A user interface framework management system for managing the user interface of a software application, the user interface framework management comprising:

   5   a merged application user interface for receiving a software application user interface element of the software application and a component user interface element of a component to be included with the software application;

          a unification unit for merging the component user interface element with the software user interface element into the merged application user interface; and

   10   an identification unit for associating the component with the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

2. A user interface framework management system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the merged application user interface placeholder receives a plurality of software

   15   application user interface elements.

3. A user interface framework management system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the merged application user interface placeholder receives a plurality of component user interface elements.

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4. A user interface framework management system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the identification unit disassociates the component from the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

   25   5. A method for managing the user interface framework of a software application when installing a component in a software application, the method comprising steps of:

          receiving a software application user interface element of the software application and a component user interface element of the component in a merged

   30   application user interface;

merging the component user interface element with the software user interface element into the merged application user interface; and

associating the component with the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

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6. The method claimed in claim 5, wherein the merged application user interface receives a plurality of software application user interface elements.

7. The method claimed in claim 5, wherein the merged application user interface

10 receives a plurality of component user interface elements.

8. A method for managing the user interface framework of a software application when unloading a component from a software application, the method comprising steps of:

15 receiving a software application user interface element of the software application and a component user interface element of the component in a merged application user interface, the component being associated with the component user interface element; and

disassociating the component from the component user interface element in

20 the merged application user interface.

9. The method claim in claim 8, wherein the merged application user interface receives a plurality of software application user interface elements.

25 10. The method claim in claim 8, wherein the merged application user interface receives a plurality of component user interface elements.

11. A method for managing the user interface framework of a software application when reloading a component from a software application, the method comprising

30 steps of:

receiving a software application user interface element of the software

application and a component user interface element of the component in a merged application user interface, the component being disassociated with the component user interface element; and

re-associating the component from the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

12. The method claim in claim 11, wherein the merged application user interface receives a plurality of software application user interface elements.

13. The method claim in claim 11, wherein the merged application user interface receives a plurality of component user interface elements.

14. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave and representing sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform a method for managing the user interface framework of a software application when installing a component in a software application, the method comprising steps of:

receiving a software application user interface element of the software application and a component user interface element of the component in a merged application user interface;

merging the component user interface element with the software user interface element into the merged application user interface; and

associating the component with the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

15. Computer-readable media for storing instructions or statements for use in the execution in a

computer of a method for managing the user interface framework of a software application when installing a component in a software application, the method comprising steps of:

receiving a software application user interface element of the software

application and a component user interface element of the component in a merged application user interface;

merging the component user interface element with the software user interface element into the merged application user interface; and

5   associating the component with the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.

16. A computer program product for use in the execution in a computer for creating a user interface framework management system for managing the user interface of a

10   software application, the user interface framework management comprising:

a merged application user interface for receiving a software application user interface element of the software application and a component user interface element of a component to be included with the software application;

a unification unit for merging the component user interface element with the

15   software user interface element into the merged application user interface; and

an identification unit for associating the component with the component user interface element in the merged application user interface.